
Unit 4:

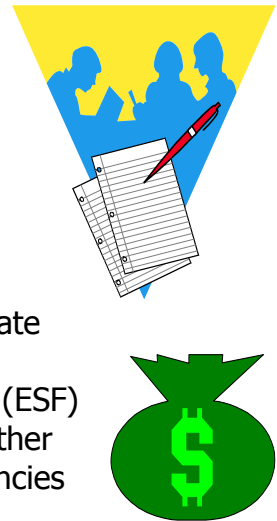
Mission Assignments

Overview

A Mission Assignment (MA) is:

- ☐ A work order issued by FEMA to a Federal agency that directs completion of a specific task.
- ☐ Intended to meet urgent, immediate and short term needs of the State

An MA can be issued to one of the twelve Emergency Support Function (ESF) lead agencies identified in the Federal Response Plan (FRP) or to any Other Federal Agency (OFA) with the expertise to complete that task. As agencies complete their assigned tasks, they bill FEMA and are reimbursed for all eligible expenses. However, Federal agencies with the statutory authority to accomplish the task are not reimbursed under a mission assignment.



Types of MA Assistance

MAs issued to federal agencies usually involve activation of their staffs to:

- ☐ Serve on emergency teams.
- ☐ Provide advice and/or goods and services in support of Federal operations.
- ☐ Provide advice and/or goods and services to the State.

There are three types of MAs. The first type is assistance to support Federal disaster operations, and the other two types are for assistance to the support State and local needs when the State does not have the capacity or capability to provide the needed assistance.

The three types of MAs assistance are:

- ☐ Federal Operations Support (FOS)
- ☐ Technical Assistance (TA)
- ☐ Direct Federal Assistance (DFA)

Federal Operations Support (FOS)

FOS is support to Federal responders, and is:

- ☐ 100 percent Federally funded.
- ☐ Available prior to and after a Presidential declaration.

Technical Assistance (TA)

TA is advice and expertise or “brain power” provided to State and local jurisdictions, and is:

- ☐ Requested by the State.
- ☐ 100 percent Federally funded.
- ☐ Available prior to and after a Presidential declaration.

Direct Federal Assistance (DFA)

DFA is support to State and local governments, and is:

- ☐ Requested by the State.
- ☐ Used for functions normally performed as State/local responsibilities.
- ☐ Subject to cost-share which the President may waive; normally for a limited time.
- ☐ Not available until *after* a Presidential declaration.

Unless the President waives the cost share, State request and approval of an MA for DFA includes responsibility to pay the applicable cost share.

Three Types of MAs: Examples

The US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is usually responsible for debris missions as the primary agency for ESF #3, Public Works and Engineering. USACE can receive debris-related MAs for each of the three types of mission assignments. Examples of MAs that FEMA may issue to USACE for debris are:

- ☐ Federal Operations Support (FOS): FEMA may issue an MA to USACE activate and preposition one of the Corps response teams such as the Debris Planning and Response Team (PRT).
- ☐ Technical Assistance (TA): FEMA may issue an MA to USACE provide technical expertise to the State government for awarding debris contracts and developing planning specifications for clearing and removing debris.

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- ❑ Direct Federal Assistance (DFA): FEMA may issue an MA to USACE to assist the State in performing the work of removing the debris. Unless waived by the President, the work done by USACE would be subject to a cost share by the State.

Mission Assignment Roles and Responsibilities

Mission assignments are documented via a Request for Federal Assistance (RFA) form that is entered and approved in NEMIS. The following officials and FEMA staff members play mission assignment roles.

Operations Section Chief

The Operations Section Chief is responsible for directing the delivery of Federal major disaster response and recovery assistance programs and services to supplement State and local government efforts, including management of the mission assignment process. Returning to the debris example: the Operations Section Chief receives any request from the State concerning assistance with debris and works with staff to determine whether mission assignments should be issued.

Project Officer

The Project Officer is responsible for monitoring and approving work done under an MA. The Project Officer is a FEMA staff member designated by the Operations Chief, usually someone involved in managing the ESF. As an example, for any of the debris projects assigned to USACE, the Public Assistance Branch Chief on the emergency team that issues the MA probably would serve as Project Officer, because ESF #3, Public Works and Engineering, is in the Public Assistance Branch.

Action Officer

The Action Officer is the lead ESF or lead Federal agency's representative, with responsibilities similar to FEMA's Project Officer. The Action Officer assists to prepare the Statement of Work (SOW), including timelines and costs, and provides oversight throughout execution of the agency's task.

Mission Assignment Coordinator (MAC)

The MAC completes most of the steps in the mission assignment process, in close coordination with the Comptroller. The MAC coordinates with the Operations Section Chief and Project Officer in reviewing and amending MAs as needed to, for example, add additional funding and/or to change timelines for task completion.

Comptroller

The Comptroller ensures that funds are available and obligates funds for MAs after all required approvals are obtained.

Approving Officials

The Regional Director or the Disaster Recovery Manager has the authority to approve mission assignments as the Federal Approving Official (FAO). Signatory authority may be delegated to the Operations Section Chief and other FEMA officials to approve MAs.

The State Approving Official (SAO) must approve all MAs for TA and DFA, since required State assurances must be given, even if the State cost share is waived. An example of a State assurance is to hold the Federal government harmless from liability in performing the work.

Mission Assignment Process

Mission assignments proceed through a number of phases from start to finish. The process begins with:

- ☐ Initial Set-up Activities/Actions.
- ☐ The Request Process.

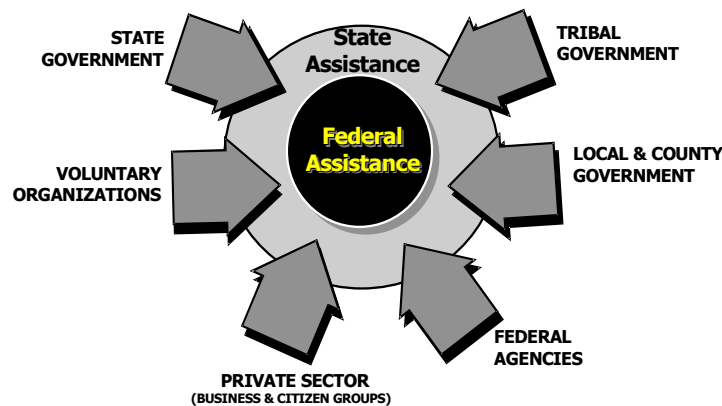
Initial Set-Up Activities/Actions

Initial activities include:

- ☐ Establishing MA signatory authority.
- ☐ Establishing a budget for MAs using the applicable fund code.
- ☐ Establishing rights in NEMIS.
- ☐ Designating which ESFs will be activated for an incident.
- ☐ Referencing the Presidential Declaration to determine the current applicable State cost share for DFA mission assignments.

Request Sources and Process

A variety of sources can identify needs for Federal assistance, but any outside requests must be coordinated with and through the State that is responsible for making the official request to FEMA for Federal assistance.



Requests to FEMA can also come from another Federal agency. Requests from within FEMA should support the FCO and SCO priorities. FEMA processes requests for assistance as follows:

- ☐ Requests are submitted on an Action Request Form (ARF) to the Operations Section
- ☐ The Action Tracker logs the incoming ARF request.
- ☐ The Operations Section Chief decides if the need is eligible under the Stafford Act and should be met by FEMA. Note: *To be eligible for Federal assistance, the goods and services requested by the State must be beyond their capacity to supply.*
- ☐ If eligible, the ARF is then sent to the Logistics Section to determine if the need can be best met by FEMA internal stocks or through acquisition. Note: *Many requests are filled by existing resources or purchases from the commercial market.*
- ☐ If the Operations Section Chief determines that the request is best met by a mission assignment, the ARF will proceed to the MA issuance process.

Some requests that often become mission assignments are:

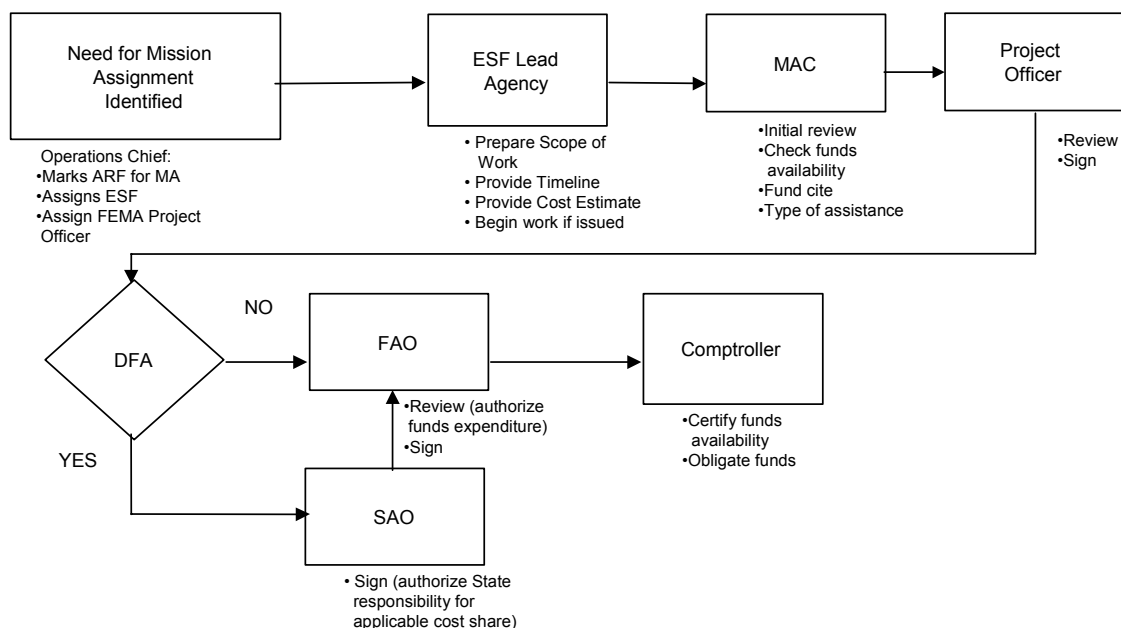
- ☐ Activation of OFA staff to ESF management positions at the DFO.
- ☐ Department of Transportation (DOT) to coordinate transportation of Federal assets.
- ☐ US Public Health Service (USPHS) to provide medical teams.

MA Issuance

To issue an MA:

- ❑ After the Operations Section Chief determines that the request is best met by a mission assignment, the ARF is forwarded to an ESF/OFA and a Project Officer is assigned to prepare a statement of work, estimated timeline, and cost estimate.
- ❑ The MAC ensures all necessary information is documented on the ARF. The information from the ARF is then entered into NEMIS and routed for review and approval.
- ❑ The Project Officer reviews and “signs in NEMIS.”
- ❑ If the MA is for TA or DFA, the State Approving Official (SAO) approves and “signs in NEMIS.”
- ❑ The Federal Approving Official (FAO) (usually the Operations Section Chief or FCO) approves and “signs in NEMIS.”
- ❑ The Comptroller verifies funds availability and upon their “acceptance” in NEMIS, funds are obligated in FEMA’s financial system, the Integrated Financial Management Information System (IFMIS).

Some common disaster MAs are pre-scripted, so they can be issued quickly. Statements of work, estimated costs, and timelines are prepared by prior agreement between FEMA and the performing agency. However, pre-scripted MAs serve as “templates.” Funding amounts may be adjusted up or down, and tasks may be added later as amendments.



Executing/Tracking and Monitoring

Execution of the mission assignment by the tasked agency usually begins after the mission assignment is issued by FEMA. The tasked agency:

- ☐ Begins the work and reports progress to the FEMA Project Officer.
- ☐ Provides funding for the work.
- ☐ Tracks all expenditures.

ESF/OFA lead agencies may:

- ☐ Subtask support agencies, which report to the lead agencies.
- ☐ Contract with vendors.

Tracking and monitoring roles and responsibilities include:

- ☐ Project Officer: Oversees work progress and expenditure of funds.
- ☐ MAC: Amends MA documentation as necessary.
- ☐ Comptroller: Tracks MA financial status; obtains additional funds as required.
- ☐ Performing agency: Submits work progress reports and financial reports.

Reimbursement and Closeout

The final steps in the MA process include:

- ☐ Lead agencies bill FEMA.
- ☐ Lead agencies review and forward support agency bills to FEMA.
- ☐ The FEMA Disaster Finance Branch reviews the bills and pays the lead and/or support agencies.
- ☐ The FEMA program staff and the FAO review the work and approve payment.
- ☐ Any remaining funds following payment of the final bill are deobligated as an amendment to the MA, and the MA file is closed. A copy of the deobligation amendment is provided to the performing agency.

